

THE INDIANAPOLIS RADIO CLUB - FOUNDED IN 1914
(The oldest continuously meeting Amateur Radio Club in the United States)

THE AMACHEWER FOR January, 2002

NEXT MEETING IS January, 11, 2001 at the Indianapolis Training Center.

Our speaker will be our own Tom Chance, K9XV, talking about 80-meter beams.

2002 IRC Officers:

President:	Bill Goodall-K9DBY	255-4749
Vice President:	Tom Chance- K9XV	783-1093
Secretary:	Maria Chambers-KB9RLG	
Treasurer:	Wade Kingery-W9JGZ	255-5191
Chief Operator:	John Lee- W9GRE	251-3793
News Editor:	Dave Kalmikoff-W9DEK	255-9285

Minutes from our December, 2001 meeting:

This was the annual dinner meeting held during the Christmas /New Year season. The dinner was held at the MCL in the Greenwood Park Mall. Dinner began at approximately 6:30PM with approximately 50 attendees. (Note: Only 3 empty chairs)

1. Dinner came to order by Bill Goodall K9DBY at 7:30 PM
2. Bill made a few announcements regarding the club. First, the IRC received a plaque endorsing our participation with the ARRL for over 50 years.
3. Second, Bill presented the Amateur of the Year award to Chuck Crist W9IH. Chuck had worked extensively with Peggy Coulter to promote amateur radio especially with the youth. Congratulations to Chuck. He was really surprised.
4. Chuck introduced Jon Haskel W8JON as our main speaker for the evening. Jon has a passion to make high quality amateur videos using the latest digital video technology. He presented a past visit to Peru, South America. His video consisted of Lima, surrounding villages and areas in the wild. Very interesting! We also learned that there is a Indiana, Peru not to be confused with Peru, Indiana.

A special thank to Jon. Great job.

The dinner and presentation concluded at approximately 9:00PM. Thanks to all for a very enjoyable evening.

News from the ARRL:

==>FCC DENIAL LEAVES LEAGUE EYEING CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON DEED RESTRICTIONS

The ARRL got the proverbial lump of coal in its stocking in late December, but it wasn't from Santa. The FCC affirmed a November 2000 staff-level decision that declined to include privately imposed deed covenants, conditions and restrictions--CC&Rs--under the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1. That policy requires municipalities to "reasonably accommodate" amateur communication in antenna-related zoning and regulation.

The ARRL a year ago appealed to have the full FCC review the earlier denial. The Commission turned down the League's Application for Review December 18 in a Memorandum Opinion and Order released December 26.

"There has not been a sufficient showing that CC&Rs prevent Amateur Radio operators from pursuing the basis and purpose of the Amateur Service," the FCC said. The Commission said hams still can get on the air without installing residential antenna systems by operating away from home, while mobile or at club stations.

The FCC said it recognizes the importance of preserving the integrity of contractual relations that CC&Rs represent. It asserted that the ARRL had submitted no specific evidence that would persuade it to abandon its long-standing policy of excluding CC&Rs from PRB-1.

ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, expressed disappointment in the Commission's ruling. "The biggest problem Amateur Radio operators face today is being able to put up an antenna," Haynie said. "Our only approach now is to get a bill into Congress."

The FCC itself even hinted that Congressional action ought to be a next logical step. "However, should Congress see fit to enact a statutory directive mandating the expansion of our reasonable accommodation policy," the FCC declared in its MO&O, "the Commission would expeditiously act to fulfill its obligation thereunder."

Haynie conceded that extending PRB-1 protection to CC&Rs would be "a tough sell" to members of Congress. He noted, however, that it's getting more difficult all the time for amateurs to find desirable housing that does not come with deed covenants and restrictions. "It's extremely serious for the amateur community, because it restricts what hams will be able to do in the future," he said.

The topic is likely to be the focus of additional discussion at this month's meeting of the ARRL Board of Directors.

In its Application for Review in late 2000, the ARRL maintained that the FCC should have the same interest in the effective performance of an Amateur Radio station and in the promotion of amateur communications regardless of whether the licensee's property is publicly regulated or privately governed

by homeowners' associations and their architectural control committees.

A copy of the FCC's Memorandum Opinion & Order in RM-8763 is available on the FCC Web site

<http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-01-372A1.doc>.

==>NEW HAMPSHIRE ANTENNA DECISION UPHOLDS PRB-1

A New Hampshire ham appears to have won a battle to erect an antenna support structure on his property. It remains to be seen, however, whether Jerry Muller, K0TV, of Hudson will be allowed to erect the extensive system of towers that he'd originally planned. In a 4-0 vote, with one justice abstaining, the Supreme Court of New Hampshire reversed a lower court ruling that ordered Muller, an ARRL Life Member, to dismantle the three towers he had erected on part of his six-acre residential tract.

Writing for the court in *Marchand v. Town of Hudson*, New Hampshire Chief Justice David A. Brock concluded that the lower court's order requiring Muller to dismantle his towers violated the limited federal preemption known as PRB-1 as well as New Hampshire's statutory codification of PRB-1. "In light of the FCC's clear directive, we agree that the superior court erred when it ordered the towers removed," Brock stated in a ruling issued December 31, 2001. The Supreme Court ruling vacates the dismantling order and sends the matter back to the town's zoning board of adjustment for consideration in light of PRB-1.

ARRL New England Division Vice Director and Volunteer Counsel Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF, represented Muller in written and oral arguments before the New Hampshire Supreme Court. ARRL General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, also filed an amicus brief on ARRL's behalf.

Unlike many amateur antenna battles, this case did not pit Muller against the town. In December 1998, Muller applied for a permit to erect three 100-foot antenna structures on his property, and the Town of Hudson granted the permit. Three of Muller's neighbors appealed the grant of the permit, but the Hudson ZBA affirmed the grant. The neighbors then sued the town and won, resulting in the order for Muller to dismantle that's now been vacated.

While Muller has won the right to get on the air in some capacity, he will still have to make a case for his proposed three-tower installation. Brock agreed with the lower court that Muller's three-tower installation did not qualify as a "customary, incidental and subordinate" accessory use permitted by Hudson's ordinance. Another amateur in Hudson has a tower at the same height, but there are no instances of three such towers on the same property. Raisbeck explained that New Hampshire's accessory use statute relies on the prevailing local, not statewide, standard.

Nevertheless, Brock said that Muller's installation may be permitted within the framework of PRB-1, if Muller can demonstrate that his three towers are necessary to "reasonably accommodate" his communications needs.

Thirteen states have incorporated PRB-1 into their statutes. The full text of the New Hampshire Supreme Court decision is available on the Court's Web site <<http://www.state.nh.us/courts/supreme/opinions/0112/march221.htm>>.

==>AO-40 "OFFICIALLY IN THE 'DEAD ZONE'"

AO-40 satellite ground controllers have begun adjusting the spacecraft's attitude as it enters a period of unfavorable sun angles. AO-40 command station team member Stacey Mills, W4SM, says that AO-40's operating schedule has been modified slightly to reflect the decreasing attitude longitude (ALON).

"As expected, the satellite has lost sun sensor lock, so we are now officially in the 'dead zone'," Mills reported. The satellite is currently in a long period during which Earth eclipses the sun near perigee--its point closest to Earth. These periods will continue well into next June.

The satellite relies on solar panels for its power. In late November, Mills said that necessary adjustments to AO-40's attitude to compensate for unfavorable sun angles over the next several months would lead to some down time for the spacecraft's transponders. The attitude shifting necessary to compensate for the unfavorable sun angle will leave AO-40's antennas pointing away from Earth for several weeks.

To save power, the transponder passbands were being turned off at various times, and the RUDAK digital transponder was scheduled to be off for up to five days.

Mills has said there will be periods of no transponder activity and a much longer period of limited--but progressively increasing--transponder activity. "AO-40 command stations will make every effort to activate AO-40's transponders, even if for only a short time each orbit, when conditions are appropriate," he said. Mills said he anticipated being able to keep the transponders active through the eclipse period for an hour or so right after perigee.

Yoshi Takeyasu, JA6XKQ, of the JAMSAT SCOPE team, recently announced the release of several new photos taken by the SCOPE cameras aboard AO-40. The photos are available on the JAMSAT Web site <<http://www.jamsat.or.jp/scope/011215/>>.

For more information on AO-40, visit the AMSAT-NA Web site <<http://www.amsat.org/>>.

==>FCC ASKS BROADCASTER, POWER COMPANY TO HELP CURE WEIRD INTERFERENCE

The FCC has written a Cincinnati AM radio station and the electric utility serving that region to help resolve an unusual and longstanding interference situation affecting local amateurs. Sharon Bowers of the FCC's Consumer

Information Bureau in December wrote Clear Channel-owned WLW and Cinergy Corp citing numerous reports of apparently spurious signals associated with WLW transmissions that have been monitored over a wide area and frequency range.

"Many of these reports indicate that, although the noise is associated with WLW transmissions, the strongest signals appear to be originating some distance from the WLW transmitter site, possibly on a high-voltage tower owned by Cinergy Corp," Bowers wrote. The FCC said the circumstances suggest that multiple sources of interference are involved. According to the FCC database, WLW operates on 700 kHz with 50,000 W into a single, top-loaded half-wave vertical tower.

One of the amateurs affected--Bob Reiff, WA8ULW, of Mason, where WLW's tower is sited--said that while the noise is most noticeable on 160 meters, it's showing up elsewhere. "It is pervasive in the spectrum," Reiff told ARRL, "and, we suspect, it is causing us problems even on our 2-meter repeater."

The FCC said that Reiff and the other complainants attempted unsuccessfully for the past two years to work with WLW and Cinergy.

Bowers noted that WLW and Cinergy already have "expended considerable efforts" to locate the noise source and cause, but the noise remained "as strong as ever according to recent reports." She noted that the noise became intermittent after some recent work done on a Cinergy high-voltage tower, and she expressed the FCC's appreciation for the cooperation to date. But, Bowers admonished, the FCC expects the responsible party to address any reports causing harmful interference to a licensed radio service.

"While the Commission recognizes that this is an unusual case, and the source could turn out to be something unexpected," Bowers wrote, "the Commission is turning to the radio station and electric utility company, asking for your help and cooperation in finding the source of the noise."

Ohio ARRL Section Manager Joe Phillips, K8QOE, credited the activities of the Greater Cincinnati Local Interference Committee with helping to bring the interference case to the FCC's attention.

==>FCC DESIGNATES COMPUTER HACKER'S HAM TICKET RENEWAL FOR HEARING

Citing character issues, the FCC has designated for hearing the Amateur Radio license renewal application of convicted computer hacker Kevin D. Mitnick, N6NHG. Mitnick's history of illegal computer-related activity--which includes several convictions and prison sentences--dates back more than a decade. Not long after his latest US District Court conviction in August 1999, Mitnick filed with the FCC to renew his General ticket.

"Mr. Mitnick's criminal background raises a substantial and material question of whether he possesses the requisite character qualifications to

be and remain a Commission licensee," the FCC said in a Hearing Designation Order released December 21. "Given his propensity to engage in criminal activities, particularly those involving fraud, we have serious reservations about Mr. Mitnick's ability to comply with our rules and regulations in the future."

Mitnick, 38, has been licensed for about 25 years. In 1999, Mitnick was sentenced to 46 months in federal prison, the FCC said, after pleading guilty to wire fraud, computer fraud and illegally intercepting a wire communication--all felonies. Prior to that, the FCC Order stated, he'd received a 22-month term for possessing cloned cell phones and for violating his supervised release after a 1989 conviction for computer fraud. He's currently on probation following his January 2001 release from federal prison.

This is not the first time that the FCC has attempted to apply character issues to a ham radio license renewal case. In designating Mitnick's license renewal for hearing, the FCC invoked the case of Herbert Schoenbohm, ex-KV4FZ, whose lengthy efforts to renew his amateur license were scuttled on the basis of character issues that, in part, stemmed from a 1992 federal fraud conviction.

The Order also referenced the case of Leslie Brewer, ex-KC4HAZ, whose license was revoked and a fine levied last year after the FCC said he lacked the basic character qualifications to be and remain a Commission licensee on the basis of his "pirate radio and other unlawful activities."

Mitnick's license expired December 12, 1999, but he may continue to operate until action is taken on his renewal application. The FCC's Order is available on the FCC Web site
<http://www.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2001/db1221/fcc01359.doc>.

==>BADGER STATE SMOKE SIGNALS EDITOR JIM ROMELFANGER, K9ZZ, SK

A voice for Amateur Radio in Wisconsin has gone silent. Jim Romelfanger, K9ZZ, of Baraboo, died December 22 at his home after suffering an apparent heart attack. He was 60. An ARRL Life Member, Romelfanger had served as Wisconsin's Public Information Coordinator. He also was the editor of the Badger State Smoke Signals, a Wisconsin Amateur Radio newspaper.

K9ZZ was a prime mover behind the annual Circus World Museum Circus Train Amateur Radio special event each summer and a guiding force in efforts to see a ham radio antenna bill enacted in Wisconsin.

"Jim was a force in Wisconsin Amateur Radio for many years, and he will be missed," said ARRL Wisconsin Section Manager Don Michalski, W9IXG.

A polio patient as a youngster in the mid-1950s, Romelfanger was first licensed in 1958 as KN6LWB, later K6LWB, on the West Coast. He became K9PKQ after moving back to his native Wisconsin and later obtained K9ZZ via the

vanity call sign program. Romelfanger was a charter member of the Yellow Thunder Amateur Radio Club.

An ARRL member for 40 years, Romelfanger was a contributor to various Amateur Radio publications, including QST, CQ and Popular Electronics, the ARRL Web site, and The ARRL Letter.

In addition to his Amateur Radio-related activities, Romelfanger edited the monthly newsletter of the Sauk County chapter of Wisconsin Right to Life. An accomplished photographer, his photos appeared in the Baraboo News Republic and the Wisconsin State Journal. He also once worked at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant and later participated in the filming of a documentary on the facility, which has been shut down.

He enjoyed a radio career at stations in Nebraska and Wisconsin. In his later years he appeared in a television ad campaign for HIS jeans and was an extra in the Julia Roberts-Nick Nolte film I Love Trouble. Among his friends he counted Dean Torrance of the surfing music duo Jan and Dean.

A service was held December 28. Memorial gifts are invited to the St Vincent DePaul Society, the American Heart Association, the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Wisconsin Right to Life or mass offerings.

==>RHODE ISLAND SECTION MANAGER ARMAND LAMBERT, K1FLD, SK

Rhode Island ARRL Section Manager Armand E. Lambert, K1FLD, died December 31, 2001, at his home in Woonsocket following a lengthy illness. He was 58.

"Armand was one of the nicest people I've ever met, and he was a steady hand as Rhode Island Section Manager," said New England Division Director Tom Frenaye, K1KI. "He was someone who really left the world better as a result of his efforts."

In 1999, Lambert outpolled two other candidates to succeed Rick Fairweather, K1KYI, who did not run for another term. He also had served as an ARRL VEC volunteer examiner. An ARRL member, Lambert was a regular participant in the New England Division cabinet meetings and, on Field Day, he made it a practice to visit as many sites in Rhode Island as possible. He also was president of the Blackstone Valley Amateur Radio Club.

Lambert's wife, Simone, KA1YVF, reported that Armand had suffered a recurrence of kidney cancer nine weeks ago which was untreatable and that he passed on peacefully on New Year's Eve. She also thanked all who had sent expressions of support. "You made Armand's transition one of love," she said.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, January 12, 2:30 PM at Lafayette Masonic Temple Lodge, Nate Whipple Highway, Arnold Mills, Cumberland, Rhode Island. Part of the service will be a time for stories, and she asked those unable to attend to share their memories via e-mail <simlamb@home.com> for

reading at the service.

Simone Lambert invited memorial donations in lieu of flowers to Rhode Island Satsang Society Inc, ECKANKAR, Religion of the Light and Sound of God, 2914 Post Road--Unit #3, Warwick, RI 02886-3168.

A successor as Rhode Island's SM will be appointed to complete Lambert's term of office.

==>SOLAR UPDATE

Heliophile Tad Cook, K7VWV, Seattle, Washington, reports: Happy new year! Because this is the first bulletin of the new year, we'll spend some time reviewing last year.

If we look at the average daily solar flux and sunspot numbers for 2001, it was really a very good year with lots of activity, considering that the peak was supposed to be in 2000. Average daily sunspot numbers for the years 1997-2001 were 30.7, 88.5, 136.3, 172.8 and 170.3. Average daily solar flux values for those same years were 81, 117.7, 153.7, 179.5 and 181.6. Given those numbers, both 2000 and 2001 look like peak years for the cycle.

Average quarterly sunspot numbers for 2001 were 147.3, 164.8, 170.4 and 198.1. Average quarterly solar flux for the same period was 164.4, 166.7, 175.5 and 219.1, so solar activity increased over the year.

Over the past week, average sunspot numbers were up 13 points, and average solar flux was about the same. Sunday had unsettled geomagnetic conditions, probably from a flare on Friday. Friday's flare upset the 10.7-cm receiver at the Penticton observatory, which read a solar flux of 655.6 for the day. This was adjusted downward by NOAA SESC to 263.

Predicted solar flux for Friday through Monday is 220, 215, 210 and 210.

Sunspot numbers for December 20 through 26 were 171, 215, 234, 220, 176, 246 and 290, with a mean of 221.7. The 10.7-cm flux was 221.1, 234.3, 242.8, 254.6, 274.5, 258.8 and 267.8, with a mean of 250.6. Estimated planetary A indices were 5, 11, 8, 7, 19, 8 and 7, with a mean of 9.3.

Sunspot numbers for December 27 through January 2 were 268, 263, 222, 218, 209, 222 and 241, with a mean of 234.7. The 10.7-cm flux was 274.6, 263, 264.4, 246.6, 245.6, 232.2 and 231.1, with a mean of 251.1. Estimated planetary A indices were 6, 5, 10, 17, 11, 7 and 7, with a mean of 9.

==>IN BRIEF:

* This weekend on the radio: The ARRL RTTY Roundup, Kid's Day, and the AGCW QRP Winter Contest are the weekend of January 5-6. JUST AHEAD: The North American QSO Party (CW), the Japan International DX Contest, Hunting Lions in the Air, Midwinter Contest (CW and SSB), the NRAU-Baltic Contest (CW and

SSB), and the DARC 10-Meter Contest are the weekend of January 12-13. See the ARRL Contest Branch page, <http://www.arrl.org/contests/> and the WA7BNM Contest Calendar, <<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.html>> for more info.

* Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course January registration: Registration for the Level I Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Course (EC-001) will open Monday, January 7, 2002, at 4 PM Eastern Time. Registration for Level II (EC-002) will open on Monday, January 14; registration for Level III (EC-003) will open January 21. Courses must be completed in order, starting with Level I. To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/cce>> and the C-CE Links found there. For more information, contact Certification and Continuing Education Coordinator Dan Miller, K3UFG, cce@arrl.org.

* Question pools to remain valid for four years: The Question Pool Committee of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators has announced that starting with the new Amateur Extra (Element 4) question pool released November 30 and going into effect this July 1, all question pools will be valid for four years. QPC Chairman Scotty Neustadter, W4WW, says the shift from a three to a four-year schedule will enable the QPC to do a better job in developing syllabi and pools for the various examination elements and allow more opportunities for public input.

* New Zealand amateur LF signal heard in Nova Scotia! Another new low-frequency distance record is being claimed. New Zealand DX tests coordinator Bob Vernall, ZL2CA, reports that on December 15, John Currie, VE1ZJ, in Canada, managed to receive and positively identify 136-kHz signals from ZL6QH, in New Zealand. ZL6QH, the Quartz Hill club station, is run by the Wellington Amateur Radio Club. The path from ZL6QH near Wellington to VE1ZJ in Sydney, Nova Scotia, has been calculated at 15,645 km--around 9700 miles. VE1ZJ detected the ZL6QH transmission using a PC and ARGO DSP software. An Amateur Radio LF signal spanned the Pacific for the first time on June 30, 2001, when Steve McDonald, VE7SL, of British Columbia, Canada, detected a 184-kHz signal from ZL6QH. The feat was repeated in September. Vernall said the next test from ZL6QH in the 136-kHz band likely would occur in mid-January. The ARRL has petitioned the FCC to authorize Amateur Radio allocations at 136 kHz and in the 160-190 kHz band. The petition is pending.

* Almost--but not quite--2 million cards in 2001: ARRL QSL Service Manager Martin Cook, N1FOC, reports that the final shipment of 138,925 QSL cards on December 31, 2001, brought the total for the year to 1,932,315 cards. "This is 63,420 more than last year," Cook said. The upswing in the number of QSL cards handled via the outgoing QSL service over the past couple of years has roughly corresponded with the current solar cycle peak.

* Cards invited for soon-to-be-nonagenarian New Zealand ham: The daughter of a New Zealander who might just be that country's oldest active amateur has invited hams to send birthday greetings to her dad. Len Hopkinson, ZL3IE,

will turn 90 on January 14. His daughter, Noeline Sapwell, says he's been a ham since 1925. "He is still active daily on the air even though he is nearly blind and can no longer attend the local radio club," she told ARRL. "What I would love for Dad for his 90th birthday is to receive some cards from hams from all around the world wishing him a happy 90th birthday. I know it will definitely bring great joy to Dad." Cards go to Len G. Hopkinson, ZL3IE, 17 Andrew St, Timaru 8601, New Zealand.

* Guantanamo Bay QSL bureau closes: The QSL bureau for KG4 two-letter suffix call signs in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, has been closed. All operations from "Gitmo" should specify QSL manager information.

* Spark gap signal heard for hundreds of miles: David Wilson, VE3BBN, reports his commemorative spark gap transmissions December 12 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Marconi's 1901 transatlantic experiments were heard hundreds of miles away. Wilson, who lives near Niagara Falls, Ontario, built a low-power rotary spark transmitter and secured permission from Industry Canada (that country's FCC equivalent) to use it briefly on 80 meters. He transmitted "MARCONI S" twice a minute and said he got more than 450 reports but estimated that only about 60 of them were valid. "The best distance was Kansas City," he said--some 850 miles away. He noted that the majority of the reports were in the 200 to 400-mile range. Additional information, photos and audio of what his transmitter sounds like are available on the "Spark Gap Transmitter Signals for Marconi Centennial" Web site <<http://www.qsl.net/g4rfr/marconi.htm>>.

* Standardized list applies only to ARRL Club Competition participants: ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, notes that the recently announced list of club abbreviations that appears on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/club-list.html>> is only for the convenience of operators whose clubs typically participate in the ARRL November Sweepstakes, the ARRL International DX Contest, the ARRL 160-Meter Contest, the ARRL 10-Meter Contest and the ARRL-sponsored VHF events in January and September. Points for these contests count toward the club competition totals. Field Day participation, while appreciated, does not count toward the ARRL Affiliated Club Competition program. It is not necessary for clubs that only participate in Field Day to be shown on the club list. The standardized list of club designators enables the ARRL contest robot to properly count electronically submitted contest scores toward a club's ARRL Affiliated Club Competition point total.

Miscellaneous:

Please feel free to e-mail (w9dek@arrl.net) or call me (255-9285) with any pertinent News for next month's Amateuer.

73,

David Kalmikoff, W9DEK
News Editor for the Indianapolis Radio Club

